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Comment

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Comment by the Editor

FOR EACH, A CHURCH; BY ALL, A COLLEGE

Ideas are the engines that move the world. Against the mass of habit they exert the energy of hope. In ethics, politics, religion, and every other field of human conduct the great generalizations that are produced by the instinct, reason, or experience of the race control the actions of mankind. The Golden Rule, for example, conceived in the quest for justice, is a sign of civilization. That the government derives its power from the people it governs is the principle upon which political liberty is founded. Confidence in the immortality of the soul has enabled millions to live nobly and die bravely. History is chiefly concerned with deeds inspired by dynamic ideas.

When a group of Andover theological students decided to answer the call to carry the gospel beyond the Mississippi, they pledged allegiance to a high ideal of Christian service. "If each one of us can only plant one good permanent church," proposed one of the twelve, "and all together build a college, what a work that would be!"

Churches they did establish in the pioneer towns of Iowa, and the college they founded is now

called Grinnell. In spite of hardship and discouragement, they persisted in their purpose, and the good they did immeasurably affected the spiritual character of the Commonwealth. To education they gave a new impetus, "to citizenship a new meaning, and to manhood a new dignity."

Other men — teachers, farmers, merchants, statesmen — impelled toward significant achievements by the force of their ideas, have made valuable contributions to the intellectual and material welfare of Iowa. There is scarcely a field of endeavor which has not yielded some evidence of enlightened progress. And yet with all our reputation for leadership in producing tall corn and fat hogs, Iowa is more distinguished for the literacy and piety of its citizens. It was not in vain that the Iowa Band of Congregational ministers, and others equally consecrated to the glorious task of promulgating religion, morality, and learning, labored among the pioneers. Their zeal left an indelible mark.

J. E. B.